

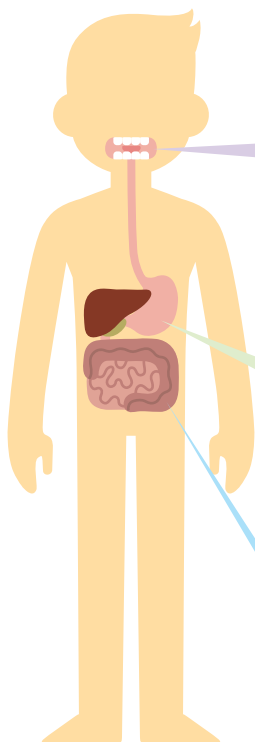
# MANAGING SELF



## DON'T RUSH IT!

Thinking about what and how you eat

Your digestive system is responsible for breaking down the food you eat so that the nutrients can be used by your body. All of the things that help you grow, keep you healthy, and give you energy, start off in your mouth.



It all starts when you open your mouth! You can't swallow food whole, like an anaconda snake. You have to chew, chew, chew! When you do that, your amazing saliva glands make lots of "spit" and that makes the food moist and easier to swallow. Your saliva also has something in it called an enzyme. This starts to break the food down so when it gets to your stomach digestion has already started. If you eat too quickly, you might swallow a lot of air as well. This can give you a sore stomach, or make you burp a lot.

The glands in your mouth can make about 1.5 litres of saliva each day!



Here's where the hard work starts. Your stomach is like a stretchy bag that stores the food you eat. An adult's stomach can hold up to 1.5 litres of food and drink. The glands in your stomach wall make acid and enzymes that help to digest the food, churning it up and breaking it down into smaller pieces. When the food is nice and sloshy, your stomach sends it bit by bit into your intestines.

An adult can have more than 7 metres of intestines. These wiggly things do a very important job. Nutrients from the food are absorbed by your intestines and then your blood carries them to the parts of the body where they are needed.

## EXPLORE & CONNECT!

Digestion starts as soon as you put food in your mouth, so it's important to think about HOW you are going to eat as soon as you start to munch. Taking your time to chew your food properly means that you'll have healthy digestion - your body will get all of the nutrients that are in the food. If you rush, and gobble up your food, you may get a stomach ache, and you won't get all of the energy that the food can provide.



1. With a partner, discuss how you eat food from your lunchboxes. What things change the way you eat? Think about:
  - where you eat
  - how well you chew your food
  - what you do while you eat
  - how long you take to eat (Do you rush so you have more time for play?).
2. Find information about what happens to your body when you eat too quickly. What causes you to get a sore stomach? Does where and how you sit, and if you are moving about, make a difference?
3. Now you know a lot about how you digest your food. Use what you know to make a resource for the junior school, explaining what digestion is and why it's important to eat slowly and chew your food properly. You could present the information as a poster, a skit, or a TV interview.



### CHECK THIS OUT!

For a fun experiment that shows how you digest baked beans, take a look at this video:

<http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/suzys-world-digestion-2010>

